



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Policy and Program Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2013

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board Program Committee was held on March 7, 2013 at the First Things First Board Room, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Members Present:	Janice Decker, Toni Harvier (by phone), Mary Ellen Cunningham, Laurie Smith, Naomi Karp, Bill Berk, Brad Willis, Kim VanPelt, Dr. Randal Christensen
Advisory Committee Co-Chairs:	Jeanette Shea, Pat VanMaanen
Public	Dawn Craft
FTF Staff:	Karen Woodhouse, Cynthia Chavarria, Stephanie Golden, Kristen Kaylor Richardson, Dr. Aaliyah Samuel, Kavita Bernstein, Dr. Roopa Iyer, Meena Shahi, Sandy Foreman, Dr. Karen Peifer

Chair Decker welcomed the Members and called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m. Chair Decker introduced herself and thanked Dr. Powell for her time and service to the Committee. Introductions of the Members followed.

Review and Possible Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Decker called for a motion to accept the meeting minutes of October 4, 2012. Member Smith motioned to approve and Member Cunningham seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Chair Decker announced that Members Julianne Hartzell and Gayle Burns have resigned from the Committee. Both seats will be dissolved and not filled.

Update on Policy and Program Advisory Committees and Sub-Committees

Children's Health: Pat VanMaanen gave an update on the work of the Advisory Committee and announced the new Health Advisory Sub-Committees.

Family Support and Literacy: The Advisory Committee last met in January. Terri Clark, State Literacy Director gave a presentation on Read on Arizona. Ms. Clark shared upcoming policy changes in the State and informed that the next BUILD Committee meeting would be on April 18. She will provide recommendations for Arizona, especially on literacy and how we can leverage and work collaboratively with other agencies and we are taking a deeper look at where we can make improvements. Ms. Clark's work is funded through collaborative partners and First Things First does not directly fund all her work. She is housed in the Virginia Piper offices. Pat VanMaanen requested a copy of the literacy framework and Dr. Samuel will provide copies at the end of the meeting.

Family, Friend and Neighbor: Karen Woodhouse provided an update on the Committee work. They will meet again next month and will finalize specific recommendations and then present these to the Program Committee.

Cultural Responsivity: Dr. Samuel announced that the last meeting of this Sub-Committee will be on March 18, 2013 with one brief teleconference meeting after that to approve minutes. The recommendations are finalized and they developed a working definition. The Family Support and Literacy Team will finalize internal works like requests that request for grant application and standards of practice language includes specific questions related to family support. We plan to have a meeting in March 2014 to discuss the status of the work plan developed and to provide any updates to this work. Dr. Samuel will present the work of the Sub-Committee at the Summit.

Update on Quality First Study Overview

The Committee had a discussion on the approach for Quality First (QF) implementation, validation and outcome studies. Karen updated the Committee on First Things First (FTF) transitions and announced that Dr. Amy Kemp will be leaving at the end of April 2013. Dr. Roopa Iyer, will be the Interim Sr. Director for Research & Evaluation. Karen presented information on the Early Childhood Professional Development System and Strategic Plan. Beginning work is being done on the recommendations. A first study is looking at a bundle of funding and levels like TEACH, Coaching and Scholarships to see if we need to make a change. We're looking at the components of QF and star ratings, are there actually five levels, do we need five or less? We've seen many providers move from a 1 star to 3 star level. We've also received a lot of anecdotal feedback. The second study looked at whether this makes a difference for kids? The data collection for this will take longer to gather. Research and Evaluation staff are working on this and FTF is looking at our system and what data we already have. Member Smith asked about why we have only five stars in the ratings? After research on other states rating systems, this was decided upon as a working level. Phase one entails working on statistical analysis of what we're labeling and what we're providing so that we're using the right scale. Phase two will be looking at how quality has been implemented. More of bundling how consultation and professional development through TEACH/Incentives come together in QF and are those services being divided across the board and how does this bundling look at different levels. Member Burk commented that a lot of providers don't think they'll reach levels 4 and 5 and Chair Decker asked him to clarify. Member Burk has witnessed that the educational requirements are hard to meet. Karen shared that the system might be changing the CLASS scoring. Providers were originally not doing well but we're thinking we can reach those levels now. Nationally those levels are low as well but FTF and the community is doing better on providing information and assistance of how to reach the higher levels. Professional Development and Pre-Service areas are going to be hard to reach. Member VanMaanen asked where the Mental Health Consultation (MHC) fits in? Karen responded that every provider will receive support, financial incentives and coaching incentives. In many regions they've funded MHC services and with the QF model right now, we provide the warmline so if providers do not have a MHC coming in, we're providing phone line technical assistance. If there's a recommendation that a MHC is needed, the request is made to FTF. The last phase will be looking at a comparative study. The timeline to get this scope out in the field is in the next couple of months so that it's available in FY14. This study will be contracted out so it's not FTF validating our own work.

Report on Professional Development (PD) System Framework and 2-year Strategic Plan (Presentation and Discussion)

Karen announced another transition of Dr. Ida Rose Flores leaving First Things First (FTF) and introduced Stephanie Golden and her work on the PD plan. The BUILD workgroups convened initially through FTF and we're happy to report that BUILD took on this work under its umbrella. Karen walked the Committee through a presentation on the PD work plan up to date.

Member Karp is very concerned with the way item #2 reads, "There is no difference between caring for and educating young children." and believes we need to add a disclaimer. If the intent is to say because you're a child care provider it doesn't mean you have to provide less quality, maybe we add "there should be no difference".

Members discussed that there's currently only one college that offers the Associate of Arts Major in Early Childhood Education (AAECE). Right now work is in the planning stages with the institutes of higher learning and we hope to meet with provosts and leaders to start moving this work forward in September. Member Van Pelt asked what the incentive is for providers to be part of the registry? Karen shared that this is something we're working on now with our marketing staff as we hope providers would want to be part of the Early Learning system. We see the Registry as a time saver for providers, with the ability to capture records, reduction of information provision, easy access to information. Member Willis shared that there are currently about 35 self-reported states that have a registry or are in the planning phase and we're currently collecting data on the quality of the registries.

Member Dr. Christensen is concerned the annual cost seems high. Karen shared that the piece that is most costly is keeping up with the accreditation and the other rates are estimated rates. Stephanie Golden noted that we're bringing in components of the national registry alliance website which provides information on all state registries. Member Burk asked if the process they currently follow, in sending transcripts to REWARD\$ and ASC will change? Stephanie replied that we're looking at there being one database across the board/state and that data for TEACH, REWARD\$, Licensing and ASC could all go into one database and we're working with these accreditation agencies so they know the database will disseminate data to other agencies. Chair Decker asked if the costs were based on other states in terms of their annual costs and Stephanie replied yes and that we looked at lots of data and we're comfortable with this estimate. Other states were hesitant to provide a fixed cost because of so many pieces in play.

In regards to the rollout timeline, this is an aggressive timeline and one reason being that the ECCS/SAC grant that will fund the work will expire soon and we need to push through while we have the funds. Member Karp agreed that if we're going to make the Professional Development Workgroup more competent, we need to push this out soon. Chair Decker finds the assertive stance to be exciting.

Development of Fiscal Year 2014 Work Plan

Discussion of possible approach to develop Committee policy and program agenda related to the early childhood system and First Things First (FTF) priority roles and School Readiness Indicators. Karen, we made our recommendations on the model and context and the BUILD system is also using the same model to guide their discussions and their intent is to fill gaps in the system and then we'll work collaboratively on how to fill these gaps. Member Shea is excited to see this work moving forward. Member Dr. Christensen is glad to hear of the discussions on Quality First (QF) and funding going into this worth while area and seeing how it's helpful. He'd like to see a smaller group of QF data to really see the differences it's making. Karen noted that the FTF Evaluation Plan includes this "relentless focus on implementation" directive as well and is looking across body of strategies and we selected the ones with the most investment like QF, Home Visiting, Care Coordination, Oral Health and Model Homes and we will provide a copy of the plan to this Committee. Member Cunningham also thinks this work is fantastic and likes the priority piece and asks FTF to keep the Affordable Care Act in mind. Member VanMaanen finds it helpful to use the framework as it helps us see what's been identified and what the priorities are. Member Karp noted that the Regional Partnership Council (RPC) Members are policy makers but doesn't think they understand that whether or not they fund something it makes or breaks the policy. It is suggested that we provide the FTF Toolkit to all Members so they can see all the standards they are moving forward. Member Shea believes we need to look at evidence of what policies are moving forward. Chair Decker questioned if one objective for the Committees was to develop a toolkit? Karen responded that it's primarily to work on recommendations and shared that FTF does have a toolkit which includes evidence based information and we're looking at enhancing data on policy levers Councils can consider funding. Member Smith asked if this topic would be part of the Summit? Karen shared that the Health Policy Advisory Committee is further along on it's work and may be ready to share by then but we're looking at putting together a packet and taking it to the Board when it's ready. Karen asked if the Committee wants to focus on this piece or do they want to have the discussions within sub-groups and bring back for full Committee response? Member Karp questioned if on the indicator of children enrolled in QF, will FTF be putting more funding into this. Karen stated that at this point the RPCs have committed \$7 million dollars to QF and we're looking at additional funding sources. The second piece, is finding how do we garner additional support and FTF is looking at a rating only piece as well. Looking for additional resources is a huge policy piece. Member Van Pelt personally believes it makes sense for information to come from the sub-committees and respond to that. Chair Decker asked how far away the other Advisory Committees were from catching up to Health Policy Advisory Committee on their framework? Karen noted that the deadline to provide this information to the Program Committee is by our Fall meeting. We can look at the progress the Advisory Committees are making and we can decide if we need to meet sooner. Member Shea commented that most policy change is occurring at local levels and Member Van Pelt asked her to clarify if she meant more support is needed from local or municipal levels. Member Shea responded that we see the Legislature playing a role but we need to bring in the main players.

Next Steps and Fiscal Year 2014 Meeting Dates:

The Committee discussed future meeting dates and determined that Thursdays from 10:00-12:00 were good days and times and asked that we avoid Monday and Friday meetings.

Chair Decker called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Dr. Christensen moved to adjourn and Member Van Pelt seconded. Chair Decker adjourned the meeting at 11:53. a.m.